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THE KADOMA DECLARATION ON EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL AND GLOBAL CHILD DEVELOPMENT,

NGO COMMITTEE ON UNICEF 1991 FORUM,

4-8 NOVEMBER 1991, KADOMA, ZIMBABWE

Summary report for the UNICEF Executive Board

1. We, the 169 participants from 42 countries representing 113 non-governmental organizations (NGOs), declare that as we meet here at Kadoma to discuss effective participation in local and global child development, we are fully aware that we are first and foremost discussing our own effective participation in child development. Our forum, which was convened by the NGO Committee on UNICEF with the support of UNICEF, consisted of the opening address by the President of Zimbabwe, His Excellency Robert Mugabe; a keynote address by Dr. Mary Racelis, the UNICEF Regional Director for Eastern and Southern Africa; presentations by representatives of NGOs and members of the Expert Committee on Child Rights; as well as case-studies, experiences, plenary and working group discussions. The forum also made use of the following important instruments: the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child; the Organization of African Unity (OAU) Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the African Child; the African Charter for Popular Participation in Development; the Declaration and Plan of Action of the World Summit for Children; and the Declaration of the World Conference on Education for All.

2. We, the participants, both as individuals and as representatives of organizations, are already fully committed to local and global child development. The forum at Kadoma has illustrated that we can play a role in the implementation of the goals of the World Summit for Children and that

there is an urgent need to enhance our own effectiveness, our own self-reliance, our own programmes and our own networking. Our forum, therefore, outlined specific measures in each of these areas.

3. We affirm that the World Summit for Children, convened in September 1990, was an original and unique event that mobilized an extraordinary response from all levels of government and society throughout the world. Therefore, we agree that, while the goals of the World Summit for Children are possible to achieve, the following are some of the constraints that must be addressed:

(a) The absence of national structures for the implementation of the goals of the World Summit for Children;

(b) The lack of the infrastructural facilities necessary for the achievement of the goals;

(c) The lack of transparency in the cooperation between North and South, which in many cases does not reflect Africa's priorities;

(d) Bureaucratic procedures that make it difficult for NGOs to obtain resources for programme implementation;

(e) Persistent civil wars and other armed conflicts;

(f) The absence of democratic and enabling Governments;

(g) The misuse and misallocation of resources, especially with regard to armament procurement;

(h) The destruction of traditional value systems, especially those positive aspects that strengthen the family;

(i) The lack of opportunity for women to participate in decisions on the living conditions and development of their children;

(j) The lack of trained personnel and inadequate material resources;

(k) The lack of coordination of NGO activities.

4. We are aware that tremendous progress has been made in improving the welfare, the status and the prospects of the world's children. We have studied closely the goals of the World Summit for Children and have shared information and experiences gained thus far in the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the OAU Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the African Child. We have examined our structures and operations, our resources and our potential as NGOs, both in the North and the South. We, therefore, affirm that we are committed to playing a role in the implementation of the goals of the World Summit for Children, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the OAU Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the African Child by:

(a) Participating in policy formulation and the development of national programmes of action, translating the goals of the Summit into concrete and specific actions for their implementation and assisting in generating, gathering and compiling relevant data for national programmes of action;

(b) Assisting Governments by providing basic infrastructures for child survival, development and protection, and reproducing, translating into local languages and disseminating appropriate documents to promote the implementation of the Plan of Action of the World Summit for Children;

(c) Enhancing the exchange of information and experiences and the sharing of resources necessary for implementing national programmes of action;

(d) Promoting awareness of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the OAU Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the African Child, and lobbying for their ratification and implementation;

(e) Monitoring the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the OAU Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the African Child;

(f) Influencing the empowerment of women in order to change negative patterns of gender roles and relationships in families and social and economic spheres by training women and children in self-reliant skills, educating men to understand the rights of women and children, and promoting partnership between men and women;

(g) Helping to restore the role of the family as a way of preventing the spread of acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS), and providing counselling for people with AIDS in order to prolong their lives and to help to find alternative means of support for their children.

5. During this forum we have noted that we have the potential to participate effectively in local and global child survival, protection and development. However, to enhance our effectiveness, we must:

(a) Coordinate our efforts to create pressure in favour of positive action to achieve our common goals, as well as to build our capacity and strengthen our initiatives;

(b) Establish formal and informal, local and international networks;

(c) Work towards strengthening South-South cooperation among NGOs;

(d) Improve our dialogue with government officials, parliamentarians and community notables on local and global child development programmes;

(e) Adopt the concepts and intentions of the African Charter for Popular Participation in Development (Arusha Charter) to enable people to have power over their own lives;

(f) Accept that communities have the ability to identify their needs and the solutions to their problems;

(g) Identify and reaffirm those positive cultural practices that foster child survival, development and protection and at the same time reorient people away from those negative cultural practices that hinder child development;

(h) Strive to eliminate the aid dependency syndrome and work towards self-reliance at all levels;

(i) Use a wide variety of media, especially traditional and folk media, in popularizing local and global child development strategies;

(j) Ensure that donors in the North acknowledge that NGOs in the South have their own agendas or priorities;

(k) Redefine our roles, minimize duplication and enhance transparency, accountability and sustainability;

(l) Ensure that structures are in place for gathering information and assessing progress towards the achievement of local and global child survival, protection and development;

(m) Make concerted efforts to obtain Pan-African observer status at OAU and to bring about the simplification of the process.

6. This forum has given us an opportunity to discuss our current programmes and to appreciate new areas of concern, especially in child survival, protection and development. We have shared experiences and information on potential programmes for action and are convinced that these exchanges will not only enhance our effective participation in child development, but also strengthen our role in intervention programmes for child survival, protection and development:

(a) Filling the education gap. We believe that the Declaration of the World Conference on Education for All should be the basis for NGO work in filling the education gap. We urge all NGOs to analyse the educational systems in their different countries and ensure that priority areas of concern in the education of girls and women are not ignored. We, therefore, encourage all NGOs to become members of the Education for All network in order to play a critical role in filling the education gap;

(b) Effects of armed conflicts on child development:

(i) The forum notes that wars lead to poverty, preventing families and communities from providing for their children, destabilizing health and educational facilities and destroying crops;

(ii) We commit ourselves to network, to discuss issues and approaches and to explore collaboration with regard to advocacy at local, national,

regional and international levels on behalf of children in situations of armed conflict;

(iii) We shall strive to influence government decisions to prevent, restrict and end wars;

(iv) We shall monitor Governments during times of war to ensure that conventions or treaties are implemented and observed, as well as to monitor the distribution of food and material supplies to make certain that aid reaches those who need it;

(v) We shall advocate that Governments at war enforce the Declaration and Plan of Action of the World Summit for Children, which calls for corridors or zones of peace for children, and we shall endeavour to promote peace education;

(c) Environmental risks to child development:

(i) We have noted with deep concern the ever-increasing deterioration of the environment and the devastating effects on child development. We have noted that environmental degradation has serious consequences on all our efforts as NGOs to promote development. We are concerned that the continent of Africa is being used as a dumping ground for toxic wastes produced in other continents. We are equally concerned with the continued exploitation of Africa's natural resources in a manner that further marginalizes and displaces the most vulnerable people of Africa;

(ii) We also note with grave concern that the exploitation and sexual harassment of children is increasing and that it should be addressed in a special way;

(iii) We commit ourselves to placing environmental issues at the top of our developmental agendas and urge all donor agencies to support our endeavours in this regard, especially in view of the forthcoming United Nations Conference on Environment and Development to be held at Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 3 to 14 June 1992;

(d) Health and nutrition strategies:

(i) We have noted with concern that health indicators are stagnating and that the successes of the 1980s are being eroded as a result of AIDS. We are equally aware that health services do not always reach the most vulnerable and that interventions do not always address the underlying social circumstances that make people vulnerable to disease;

(ii) We commit ourselves to the promotion and protection of breast-feeding as outlined in the Innocenti declaration of 1990 and the International Code of Marketing of Breast Milk Substitutes. We

shall endeavour to improve household food security and advocate for the use of early warning systems in cases of famine and drought;

(iii) We call upon all NGOs to make information, education and communication on family planning available to all women;

(e) Reaching the most vulnerable:

(i) We have shared experiences on how to mobilize the most vulnerable people to participate in development. We are aware that the most vulnerable suffer physically, mentally, spiritually and socially. Extreme poverty prevents its victims from realizing their full potential and participating fully in the development of their children and of their communities;

(ii) We have identified the causes and categories of vulnerable groups in our societies. We recognize that the most vulnerable include other groups besides the poor, such as street children and the handicapped;

(iii) We shall endeavour, therefore, to ensure that programmes aimed at reaching the most vulnerable do benefit them effectively. We resolve to make the most vulnerable groups a priority of our interventions;

(f) Structural adjustment and child development:

(i) We have noted with grave concern that structural adjustment programmes are not always compatible with either democracy or human development. We are convinced that structural adjustment programmes are systematically used to divert resources away from basic needs programmes to economic programmes with the primary purpose of increasing the debt-servicing capacity of individual States at the expense of the lives of the most vulnerable groups, such as children and women, and the entire impoverished majority of the African population. We have been made aware during this forum that already in many African countries structural adjustment programmes have had a disabling effect on the majority of the people, especially women and children;

(ii) We therefore commit ourselves to monitor, analyse and evaluate effectively the effects of structural adjustment programmes in our respective countries and to make public such findings, using effective mechanisms of popular advocacy, diplomatic lobbying and empowerment of the people, to call for policy changes in these programmes. We call upon NGOs in the North to persuade donor agencies to introduce responsible conditions of borrowing and lending and to expose their Governments to the anomalies and detrimental effects of structural adjustment programmes on the most vulnerable communities.

7. In conclusion, we are convinced that a spirit of solidarity and common purpose has emerged throughout the forum, with a clearer vision of the role we each need to play. Our collective efforts to promote child survival, protection and development must be mutually reinforced with those of all partners and like-minded bodies. We are committed to preserving this solidarity, to continuing to work and search together for ways of increasing our effectiveness, and to spreading this solidarity to others.